

VZCZCXYZ0000  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLGB #0281/01 0821626  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 231626Z MAR 06  
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2567  
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS KIGALI 000281

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/C  
EUCOM FOR POLAD

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [PINR](#) [RW](#)  
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KAGAME RESHUFFLES CABINET

REF: A. KIGALI 18

[1](#)B. KIGALI 221

[1](#)1. Summary: On March 11 President Kagame announced a cabinet reshuffle, replacing the Finance Minister, dropping three ministers, and creating a new ministerial post in the Office of the President for scientific research and technology. Despite rumors for several weeks of an impending shake-up, the weekend announcement came as a surprise to some. While the GOR did not publicly explain the reasons for the reshuffle, media reports attributed it to the poor performance of certain ministers. End summary.

[1](#)2. For the second time in barely seven months, President Kagame reshuffled his cabinet on March 11, removing three ministers, appointing the Finance Minister as the new Minister of Public Service and Labor, and promoting two state ministers to full ministerial status under the presidential prerogatives of Article 116 of the Constitution. He also created a new ministerial post for scientific research and technology under the President's Office, bringing the total number of ministers under his direct supervision to two. The latest change increased the number of full ministers from 17 to 18 and decreased the number of state ministers from 12 back to 11.

[1](#)3. Ambassador Stanislas Kamanzi, former Ambassador to the UN, was appointed Minister of Infrastructure, replacing Evariste Bizimana, who was dropped from the cabinet. State Minister of Commerce James Musoni replaced Prof. Manasseh Nshuti as Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, while Nshuti replaced Andre Bumaya as Minister of Public Service and Labor. Bumaya was dismissed. Sheikh Moussa Fazil Harerimana, who had been appointed Governor of the Western Province in the government restructuring just two months ago (ref A), was appointed Minister of Internal Security, replacing Christophe Bazivamo, while Bazivamo replaced Drocella Mugorewera as Minister of Lands and Environment. Mugorewera was removed after five years in the cabinet.

[1](#)4. Vincent Karega, Secretary General of the Ministry of Public Service, was appointed Minister of State in Charge of Industry and Investment Promotion. Protais Mitali, former 2003 MDR parliamentary commission spokesman and Minister of State in Charge of Cooperation in the Ministry of Commerce, was promoted to Minister of Commerce, replacing James Musoni. Dr. Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya, Minister of State in Charge of Higher Education, was promoted to Minister of Education, replacing Prof. Romain Murenzi, who was appointed to a new ministerial post in the Office of the President in charge of scientific research and technology.

[1](#)5. When asked about his priorities for the Finance

Ministry, Musoni told press that he would focus on pushing forward the ongoing Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies, mobilizing revenues internally and externally, developing a macroeconomic framework, and advising the government on finance-related issues. He also promised to work closely with development partners.

¶6. Although the GOR did not publicly state the reasons for the reshuffle, media reports attributed it to poor performance by ministers. According to the pro-government "The New Times," the President had expressed reservations over the performance of certain ministers. During a recent government retreat, Andre Bumaya and Prof. Murenzi reportedly were singled out for the poor performance of their ministries. Some observers of Rwanda's education system speculated that Murenzi lost his post because he had increasingly failed to address pertinent problems such as an ongoing controversy surrounding the new salary structure for lecturers. Others suggested that the President specifically created a separate ministry for science and technology and placed it under his direct control to ensure that the GOR does not fall short of its goal of turning Rwanda into a regional ICT hub.

¶7. Pro-government media criticized outgoing Minister of Infrastructure Bizimana for possible embezzlement of public funds from an ongoing public auction of government vehicles. According to "The New Times," the Auditor General had expressed concern over the low revenues generated by the sale of more than 3,000 government vehicles. Political analysts also suggested that Bizimana's dismissal could be linked to the ongoing dispute between the Rwanda Civil Aviation Authority and SN Brussels (ref B).

¶8. Outgoing Minister of Public Service and Labor Bumaya, president of a Muslim-dominated political organization (PDI), was dismissed amid investigation for alleged irregularities that have long marred his ministry. According to local media, Bumaya, among others, had been accused by lawmakers, trade unions, and civil rights groups of implementing the massive retrenchment of public servants prior to the creation of the constitutional Public Service Commission, failing to create a national labor policy, and committing irregularities in the hiring and firing process. Bumaya was recently summoned by parliament to explain his failure to successfully implement civil service reforms. Media reports cited Bumaya's failure to properly coordinate the GOR's ongoing reduction-in-force, which resulted in the recruitment of terminated public servants as private consultants. Bumaya reportedly also made unrealistic promises regarding civil service salaries.

¶9. According to local media, outgoing Minister of Lands and Environment Mugorewera will be remembered as an aggressive environmentalist who improved the country's vegetation, planted millions of trees, and implemented unpopular bans on materials hazardous to the environment, including plastic bags. She also implemented bans on cattle grazing and tree cutting, which made life difficult for brick and charcoal dealers with no viable alternatives. TVR News recently reported that she had threatened to bring to justice local residents of the famine-ravaged Bugesera district who had cut down trees in search of arable land. Others argued that Mugorewera failed to successfully implement sustainable environment-friendly policies.

¶10. Some analysts suggested that Nshuti, who was Finance Minister for just seven months, was transferred to a less prestigious position due to his poor performance compared to that of his predecessor Donald Kaberuka. (Note: Nshuti was appointed Finance Minister in the last cabinet reshuffle in August 2005 after Kaberuka was elected president of the African Development Bank. End note.) Additionally, while not mentioned by name, Nshuti was among government officials criticized for their poor relations with, and lack of accessibility to, donors at the expense of government projects. He was also criticized for attempting to build his own team, firing many of Kaberuka's staff, which

triggered resentment among the staff.

¶11. Comment: Ten (previously 11) of the 29 Cabinet seats are occupied by women, which meets the constitutionally recommended guideline that women be "granted at least 30 percent of posts in decision-making organs." The reshuffle comes on the heels of a government retreat held last month and sweeping administrative and territorial reforms. It put to rest speculations that the Cabinet would be downsized from 11 ministries to eight, although some observers predict another reshuffle. While it is not clear that the President dropped the ministers for their poor performance as widely reported or appointed new ministers for their superior skills, the reshuffle appears aimed at matching the best people at his disposal to the pressing problems unresolved by the outgoing ministers. Whether the shake-up will ultimately result in improved delivery of services remains to be seen, but it may be a whiff of a results-oriented president impatient with slow deliverers.

ARIETTI